

# Airport activity, 2022

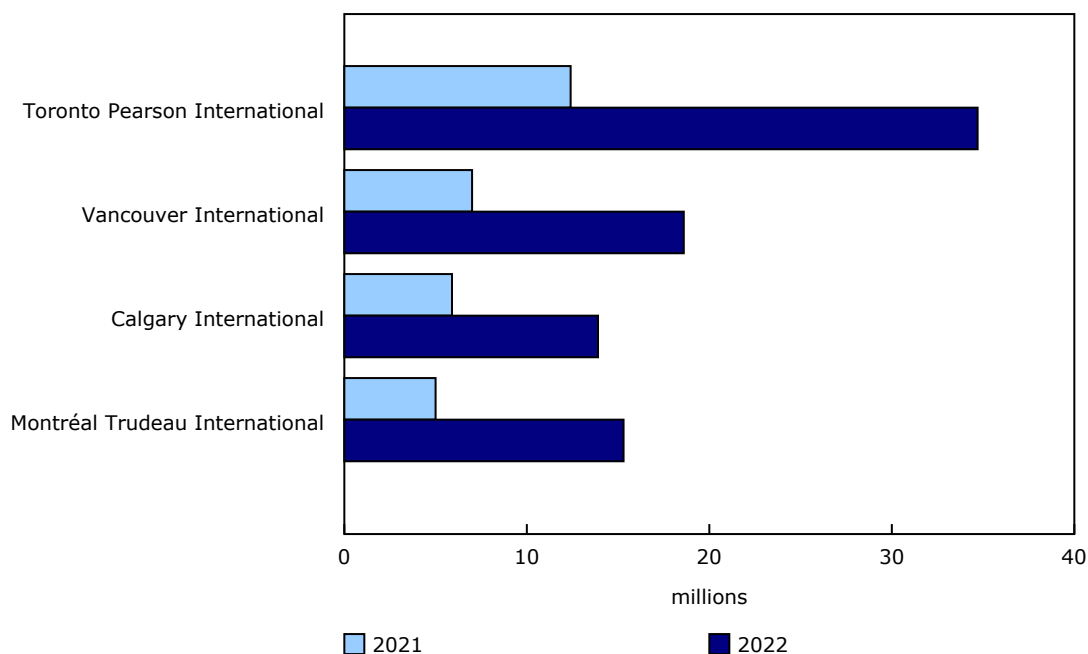
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Friday, July 28, 2023

## Highlights

Two years after the COVID-19 pandemic brought worldwide air travel to its knees, the Canadian aviation industry continued to recover in 2022. While the number of passengers enplaned and deplaned at Canadian airports in 2022 (117.3 million) was roughly two and a half times greater than the number in 2021, it remained less than three-quarters (72.0%) of the 2019 pre-pandemic level (162.9 million).

In 2022, passenger traffic increased significantly at Canada's four largest airports. Toronto/Lester B Pearson International, Vancouver International, Montréal/Pierre Elliott Trudeau International and Calgary International each reported roughly twice the passenger traffic from 2021.

**Chart 1**  
Passengers enplaned and deplaned at the top four Canadian airports

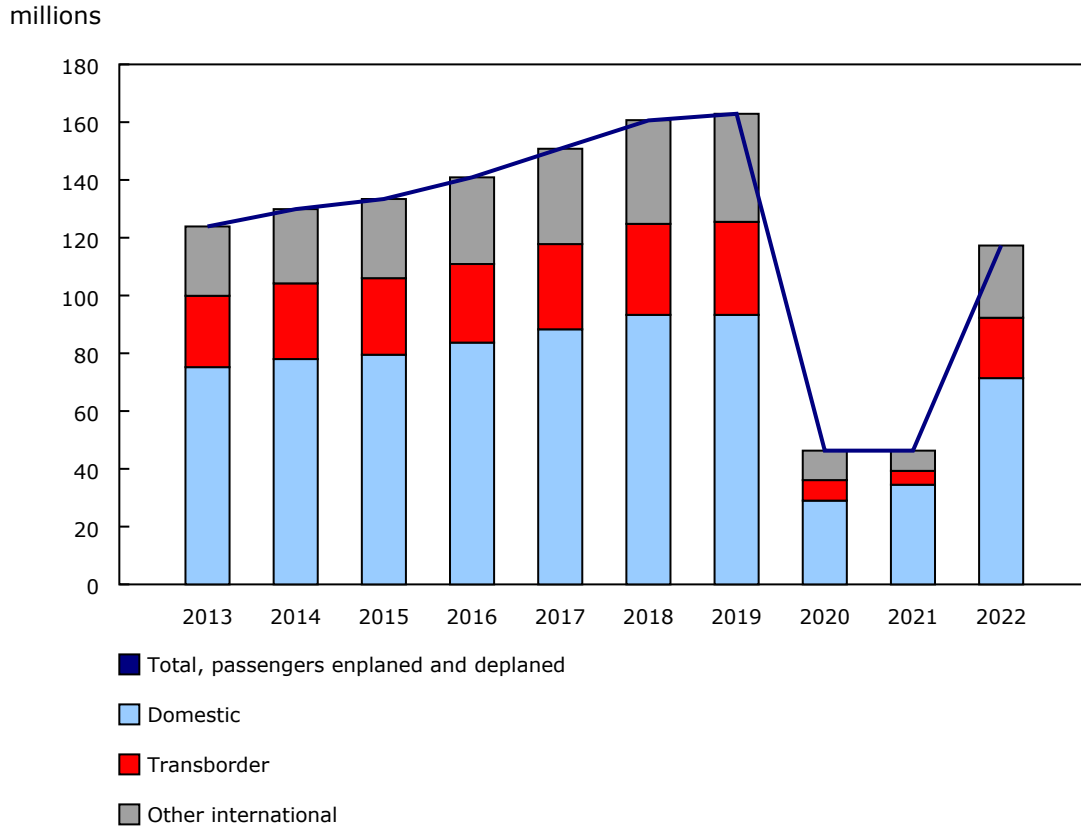


Source(s): Table 23-10-0253-01.

## Pent-up travel demand takes to the skies

Following measures taken in early 2022 to combat the Omicron COVID-19 variant, travel restrictions were eased in March and completely lifted by October. The unexpected sharp increase in passenger volume during the busy summer travel season left some major airports grappling with challenges largely stemming from staffing-related problems.

**Chart 2**  
**Air passenger traffic, by sector**



Source(s): Table 23-10-0253-01.

Passenger volumes increased throughout the year, with the number of domestic passengers doubling, up 36.9 million from 2021. Transborder traffic (Canada–United States) and other international traffic both saw large gains in 2022 as well. Transborder traffic increased by more than four times (+16.1 million passengers) and overseas traffic rose by three and a half times (+18.0 million passengers) from 2021.

In 2022, the four busiest airports accounted for over two-thirds (70.3%) of all passenger traffic in Canada, bolstered by much larger shares of transborder (90.9%) and other international traffic (96.0%).

### Cargo operators turn to a new "business as usual"

Early in the pandemic, some airlines made aircraft modifications and began to operate cargo-only flights. Although many of these temporarily converted aircraft gradually returned to passenger operations, the largest cargo movers expanded both freighter networks and cargo-only fleets, while adding new all-cargo services.

Although air cargo business continued to grow in Canada, it was dampened by decreased global demand because of a variety of factors: COVID-19's Omicron variant in Asia, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, rising oil prices, inflation, interest rate increases and supply chain disruptions.

Overall, the amount of cargo loaded and unloaded at Canadian airports increased by 10.9% in 2022. Domestic cargo transported by air increased 4.5% from 2021 to 691 000 tonnes in 2022. Transborder cargo fell by 3.5% (to 252 000 tonnes), while other international cargo grew by 32.4% (to 498 000 tonnes).

Despite this continued growth, the annualized increase in [quarterly goods revenue](#) earned by the Canadian airline industry slowed to 2.5% in 2022, down from 30.9% reported in 2021.

**Table 1**  
**Passengers enplaned and deplaned at the top four Canadian airports**

	2021	2022	2021 to 2022
	number		% change
<b>Canada</b>	<b>46,280,911</b>	<b>117,298,931</b>	<b>153.4</b>
Toronto Pearson International	12,367,942	34,732,460	180.8
Vancouver International	7,000,547	18,550,034	165.0
Calgary International	5,897,116	13,891,125	135.6
Montréal Trudeau International	5,008,101	15,323,863	206.0

Source(s): Table [23-10-0253-01](#).

**Note to readers**

*This survey collects data on passengers enplaned and deplaned and cargo loaded and unloaded at Canadian airports.*

*With each release, data for the previous reference year may be revised.*

**Cargo data:** *It is important to note that the air cargo data presented do not represent the total cargo loaded and unloaded in Canada. Comprehensive cargo data are not collected for the following reasons: (1) the regional and local scheduled carriers do not file cargo data for the Airport Activity Survey and (2) the major charter survey does not collect data on domestic courier cargo or domestic entity cargo flights.*

**Available tables:** [23-10-0253-01](#) and [23-10-0254-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [2701](#).

Additional analytical information is now available in "[Airport Activity: Air Carrier Traffic at Canadian Airports, 2022](#)," as part of the service bulletin *Aviation* ([51-004-X](#)).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).